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Comprehensive business case for the application of flexible workplace strategies at the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to section IV of General Assembly resolution 68/247 B, the present report provides a comprehensive business case for the application of flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters.

The report summarizes the main findings of a flexible workplace study undertaken during 2014, including the results of a pilot of flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters and the findings of a review by external consultants. It also includes a detailed cost-benefit analysis and an implementation proposal.

The General Assembly is requested to approve the Secretary-General's proposed implementation plan and to authorize the Secretary-General to take the initial steps necessary for implementation at United Nations Headquarters.

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Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	4
	A. Background	4
	B. Interdisciplinary working group	4
II.	Assessment of the potential for implementation of flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters	5
	A. Workspace utilization study	5
	B. Workplace performance survey	6
	C. Analysis of the physical environment of the current workplace	7
	D. Existing information and communications technology infrastructure and support	8
	E. Analysis of the space planning profiles of departments and offices	8
	F. Analysis of staff readiness	10
	G. Critical factors for successful implementation	11
III.	Pilot implementation	12
	A. Pilot guiding principles	12
	B. Research design	12
	C. Setting the scene and stages of change	13
	D. Findings and conclusions from the pilot, including feedback provided by participants	14
	E. Space efficiency as demonstrated by the pilot	15
IV.	Business case findings and conclusions	16
	A. Findings of the pilot programme, study and survey	16
	B. Qualitative benefits of a flexible workplace	17
	C. Quantitative benefits of a flexible workplace	17
	D. Comparison of project costs for proposed implementation at Headquarters and anticipated reduction in long-term commercial rental costs	18
V.	Strategy and support for the flexible workplace programme	19
	A. Human resources management support system	19
	B. Information technology support, personal and corporate strategy	19
	C. Communications approach	20
	D. Space planning and reconfiguration	20
VI.	Integration of a flexible workplace with other initiatives	22
	A. Umoja	22
	B. Strategic heritage plan	22

C. Sustainability 22
D. Organizational resilience management system 23
VII. Implementation plan for flexible workplace at Headquarters 23
VIII. Estimated project cost for implementation of a flexible workplace at Headquarters 25
IX. Proposed funding for the project 27
A. Funding approach 27
B. Resource requirements for the biennium 2014-2015 28
X. Implementation of flexible workplace strategies at other duty stations 29
XI. Next steps 29
XII. Recommended actions to be taken by the General Assembly 30
Annexes
I. Estimated project cost by year for implementation of a flexible workplace at Headquarters 31
II. Fit-out costs (per square foot) for the Secretariat Building and the FF Building 32

I. Introduction

A. Background

1. In response to the request of the General Assembly in section IV of its resolution 68/247 B, the present report provides a comprehensive business case for implementing flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters, which the Secretary-General believes will improve the Organization by modernizing the staff workplace environment and will reduce the Organization's real estate footprint and environmental impact.

2. By defining work as an activity rather than a place, the vision of a flexible workplace directly supports the wider management reform goal of the Secretary-General to create a modern, agile business model for the Secretariat, and one that increases effectiveness across different work processes. Just as Umoja will harmonize business processes so that no matter where one works the administrative processes and tools will be the same, and just as mobility will enable the Organization to more easily move staff strategically, a flexible workplace will provide staff the necessary flexibility to work where they will be most effective. Furthermore, giving staff the information technology tools and flexibility they need to work in different locations will have the added benefit of enhancing the Organization's business continuity preparedness.

3. By implementing a flexible workplace, the United Nations will seek to allocate space in such a way as to maximize the effectiveness and well-being of its staff. The types of space provided should be appropriate to the work that staff perform. Flexible workplace strategies require a coherent and integrated approach to staff management, technology and workspace needs. The business case provided in the present report therefore addresses each of these components.

4. A flexible workplace programme is distinct from the existing flexible working arrangements. The latter comprise a human resource policy promulgated by the Secretary-General (see ST/SGB/2003/4) permitting compressed work schedules and telecommuting, among other features.

5. In the present report, the Secretary-General explains the activities involved in studying and piloting flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters which have been undertaken since the issuance of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/68/387). During this period, coordination has been ongoing with colleagues working on the strategic heritage plan at the United Nations Office at Geneva. A proposal for wider implementation is also made for New York in the light of opportunities presented by the upcoming expiry of leases in commercial buildings. Consideration of flexible workplace strategies for other duty stations would be the subject of further study, taking due consideration of the local conditions, requirements and potential benefits (see sect. X).

B. Interdisciplinary working group

6. The successful implementation of a flexible workplace requires more than simply altering office layout and offering a variety of workspaces for staff. Information technology and human resources management support are critical

elements. For this reason, the Secretary-General established an interdisciplinary working group to ensure that the flexible workplace programme is developed in a holistic way, taking fully into consideration the human resources, technology and facilities aspects of the matter. The interdisciplinary working group includes representatives from the Office of Human Resources Management, the Office of Information and Communications Technology, the Facilities Management Service of the Office of Central Support Services and the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management.

7. The interdisciplinary working group and project team were assisted by external consultants who specialize in flexible workplace strategies. The consultants conducted space utilization studies, staff surveys and a detailed work style assessment through engagement with staff and managers at all levels. They also analysed the real estate portfolio, including the lease arrangements for rental properties.

II. Assessment of the potential for implementation of flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters

A. Workspace utilization study

8. In his report on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/68/387), the Secretary-General noted that a limited study conducted in the summer of 2013 found that the average workspace utilization rate in the Secretariat Building was approximately 50 per cent. To investigate this finding further, during the second week of September 2014, a comprehensive workspace utilization study was conducted of 15 floors of five buildings in New York, namely the Secretariat Building, DC-1, DC-2, the Innovation Luggage Building, and the UNITAR Building. A total of 1,160 workspaces were observed during the study in the five buildings as shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1
Scope of workspace utilization study conducted at Headquarters in September 2014

Building floor	*Number of spaces observed*	*Percentage of total spaces observed*
DC-1	**164**	**14**
10th floor	85	7
15th floor	79	7
DC-2	**140**	**12**
5th floor	70	6
17th floor	70	6
Innovation Building	**163**	**14**
5th floor	95	8
6th floor	68	6
Secretariat Building	**592**	**51**
12th floor	112	10
14th floor	99	9
15th floor	58	5

Building floor	*Number of spaces observed*	*Percentage of total spaces observed*
21st floor	105	9
26th floor	114	10
36th floor	104	9
UNITAR Building	**101**	**9**
3rd floor	33	3
4th floor	35	3
5th floor	33	3
Total	**1 160**	

9. The workspaces observed included work seats, conference rooms, booths, informal meeting areas, pantries, seating areas, touchdown areas, work rooms and miscellaneous areas. Every hour on the hour, the analysts recorded the number of people in a particular space, the primary and secondary activities taking place and the equipment being used. The following departments and offices, representing a variety of work types and styles, were included in the workspace utilization study: Department of Management, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Public Information, Office of Internal Oversight Services and Office of Legal Affairs.

10. It was found that, on average, between 38 and 48 per cent of the assigned work spaces are being utilized at any one time during the working day (varying according to the time of day). The observed utilization rates are consistent with utilization rates seen at other organizations that do not have flexible workplace strategies. These findings demonstrate that space could be used significantly more efficiently if the Secretariat were to introduce flexible workplace strategies.

B. Workplace performance survey

11. A workplace performance index survey was conducted by the external consultants. The index was used as a measurement and analysis tool to assess the space effectiveness related to work modes and the effectiveness of the existing workplace design and its physical attributes at United Nations Headquarters. In addition to the physical aspect of the workplace, the survey also assessed employee work patterns and satisfaction with elements of the existing workplace.

12. In September 2014, a web-based survey was distributed to a random sample of United Nations staff based at Headquarters. The results were compared with available benchmarks of industry averages, top performance firms and a select group of Government agencies of the United States of America, including the Department of Commerce, the Department of Health and Human Services, the General Services Administration and the Library of Congress. Benchmarks for the index employed by the consultants are only available for the above-mentioned United States Government agencies. The survey findings indicate that the staff believe that there is room for improvement in terms of how the physical workspace can be tailored to better meet staff and organizational needs at United Nations Headquarters.

C. Analysis of the physical environment of the current workplace

13. As a prerequisite to identifying effective and appropriate workplace solutions, a detailed analysis was conducted of the existing infrastructure of the New York real estate portfolio of the Secretariat, including the architecture, the efficiency of space, the mechanical, electrical, lighting and plumbing systems and a space planning analysis. The analysis also assessed options for the organization of space types. It revealed that buildings in the existing portfolio were at different stages of readiness for a flexible workplace programme and could accommodate such a programme to varying degrees. The main differences were related to the extent of open space and access to daylight and exterior views, the ability to accommodate diverse space types to foster collaboration, the extent of information technology network technology, floor headcount and restroom capacity. All buildings in the current portfolio were considered for possible implementation of a flexible workplace programme and were found to be suitable to a greater or lesser extent.

14. A summary of the main considerations for each building, including space conversion and information technology support, is provided below:

(a) Secretariat Building: with its current open plan and fully upgraded building systems, the Secretariat Building is the most suitable building in the New York real estate portfolio for a flexible workplace programme. Modifications to the furniture layout would enable a flexible workplace environment in the Secretariat Building. The change most needed to enable a flexible workplace environment in the Secretariat Building is conversion to more diverse space types, including more collaboration and social spaces. A list of the proposed space types is included in table 5 of the present report;

(b) DC-1 and DC-2 Buildings: the current layout of the buildings includes a large percentage of enclosed offices rather than an open floor plan. In order to achieve a flexible workplace environment in DC-1 and DC-2 the floors would have to undergo a significant and costly renovation and reconfiguration, with the main objective being to reduce the amount of closed office space, bringing in new mobile furniture and technology and creating a greater variation in space types, mainly for collaboration and common use. Consequently, DC-1 and DC-2 are not being considered for implementation of flexible workplace, recognizing also that the premises will probably not be available from 2023;

(c) Innovation Building: the conventional rectangular floor plate makes the Innovation Building easily adaptable to the flexible workplace programme. The current layout varies from floor to floor, with a mixture of open plans (such as in the Umoja office) and enclosed offices (as in the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Department of Public Information). As with DC-1 and DC-2, the Innovation Building would require major renovations and is therefore not being considered for implementation of flexible workplace;

(d) UNITAR Building: the UNITAR Building is owned by the United Nations and already has a mostly open floor plan. In some ways, the UNITAR Building already has characteristics of a flexible workplace. The upper three floors operate with flexible arrangements, which have enabled the occupant, the Verbatim Reporting Service of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, to accommodate the expansion of staff during peak demand times of

the year. As such, those floors do not require further renovation to increase efficiency or to accommodate staff from other leased spaces;

(e) FF Building: the FF Building is one of the commercial buildings leased by the United Nations. The building has a traditional office floor layout with an even mix of fixed perimeter enclosed offices and interior open planning. There is therefore limited natural light in the interior areas of the floors. Although the floors are currently efficient compared with the rest of the properties in the United Nations Headquarters portfolio, converting to a flexible workplace environment would still increase efficiency and significantly improve the quality of the workplace with increased access to natural light. The FF Building has large floors with upgraded mechanical systems, which would lower overall renovation costs, thus making the building a good candidate for implementation of a flexible workplace.

D. Existing information and communications technology infrastructure and support

15. The existing information and communications technology infrastructure of the Secretariat provides a strong foundation within the Organization that can be leveraged to support the implementation of a flexible workplace. A flexible workplace depends on technological solutions to support its principles, such as mobile technology that untethers staff from their desks and empowers staff to perform tasks in whatever environment is most suitable. Information and communications technology equipment and services that are needed to support a flexible workplace include:

(a) Mobile equipment: laptop, docking station and smart phone;

(b) The existing Mobile Office service: this enables authorized users to access data or certain United Nations enterprise applications from any computer with an Internet connection, including from outside United Nations premises;

(c) The existing Unite suite: a set of services that allows United Nations staff to connect, share and exchange information. Some of the services include social networking, document management, mobile access to Lotus Notes, Webex and universal drives;

(d) The existing Internet protocol telephone system: the system permits the use of any telephone by persons with an assigned United Nations telephone extension. It also offers a call forwarding function that allows users to forward all calls from the extensions to a mobile phone.

E. Analysis of the space planning profiles of departments and offices

16. While flexible workplace strategies typically call for an initial standardization of space types and components, the goal is to tailor the implementation to the specific needs of departments and offices based on the specific mix of tasks those departments and offices perform. Accordingly, the standardized space types need to be customized in arrangements suitable for the types of work being undertaken in each department. Through a series of staff engagement exercises, space planning profiles were defined for United Nations Headquarters. Five space planning profiles

have been identified, based on the level of privacy required for the type of work to be performed, the amount of focused work required, requirements such as access to libraries or other reference documents and technology requirements, and the amount of external and internal collaboration needed. The five categories of space planning profiles that cover the United Nations departments and offices are described below:

(a) Executive profile: departments, offices or divisions requiring this profile are accountable for high-level decision-making in the Organization. They have high confidentiality and privacy needs owing to the subject matter being handled, often by very senior staff. Staff undertaking such activities host external guests frequently. There is therefore a need for a substantial amount of enclosed collaboration and focus space. Consequently, this space planning profile yields the lowest number of work seats per floor;

(b) Policy profile: departments, offices or divisions requiring this profile need a good balance of open and enclosed space owing to the diverse nature of the tasks performed. Collaboration and teamwork is essential; therefore, one collaboration seat for every work seat is allocated in the plan for these needs. This is a relatively high ratio when compared to traditional office planning but is common for flexible workplace;

(c) Collaboration profile: many departments, offices or divisions have work that requires close coordination and collaboration with internal and external groups. In these areas, there is a need for a greater amount of collaboration space, particularly for open collaboration, since interactions tend to be less formal and are more efficient in an open setting;

(d) Privacy profile: a notable requirement of areas of a number of departments, offices or divisions (including the Office of Legal Affairs, the Office of Oversight Services and areas in the Department of Management) is the need for privacy owing to the confidential nature of the work and work materials. This demands a high amount of enclosed focus space in the form of offices and focus rooms. Most of the work is done individually and any teams tend to be small. As a result, this profile requires the least amount of open collaboration space;

(e) Operations support profile: a number of staff perform functions primarily supporting, enabling and assisting other groups in the Organization. Their primary tasks are individual and focus-based. Such staff often have a need for access to specialized technology and other resources. They also require the most open focus space and enclosed collaboration space. As a result, this planning profile yields the greatest occupancy per floor.

17. An analysis of the work performed by departments, offices and divisions and the applicable space planning profile for each, has revealed the distribution of space planning profiles across the total Headquarters staff population set out in table 1 below.

Table 1
Analysis of Headquarters staff population by space planning profile

Space planning profile	*Percentage of total staff population applicable to profile*
Executive	2
Policy	19
Collaboration	15
Privacy	6
Operational support	54
Other (not yet specified)	4

18. Further engagement with departments and offices would be required during eventual implementation of a flexible workplace programme to ensure that space configurations are tailored to meet the exact needs of each group of staff.

19. Each of the five space planning profiles has a unique combination of space types, based on the needs of departments, offices or divisions and the nature of their work. It should be noted that within each department there will often be a combination of space planning profiles. While space planning profiles for some areas include a high percentage of closed space for confidentiality, such as areas conducting human resources or legal work, other profiles reflect requirements of departments and offices that perform activities that require more collaboration on a day-to-day basis, such as operational support. A number of small offices have yet to be captured in the engagement exercise with departments. These are shown as "Other (not yet specified)" in table 1 above and, as indicated, they account for 4 per cent of the total Headquarters staff population. Direct engagement with those offices would be necessary to determine the mix of space that would work best for each of them.

F. Analysis of staff readiness

20. In his report on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/68/387), the Secretary-General included findings from small focus group workshops, which indicated a high level of interest in flexible working and confidence on the part of staff in their own technology skills and ability to manage work in remote ways.

21. To further gauge staff readiness and interest in a flexible workplace, the Department of Management launched a survey of Headquarters staff in February 2014 to collect views about the current office environment and future workspace opportunities at United Nations Headquarters. Some 1,170 United Nations Headquarters staff responded, providing information about their preferences regarding work, the office and any constraints they may be facing with their work environment. The survey results indicated that staff favour a workplace with natural light that provides flexibility and offers the freedom to choose where to work depending on their needs at any specific time, with, for example, areas to collaborate with others or space to concentrate on individual work. These factors would be incorporated into future plans for a flexible workplace.

22. Although the general response from the survey was positive, further engagement with the staff reveals that the readiness for change varies widely across the Organization. Feedback has shown that, while some teams and individuals welcome the flexible workplace strategies, others are less enthusiastic about the concepts as they currently understand them.

23. To deal with this range of readiness, a strong change management strategy is essential to bring staff to an equal level of acceptance and understanding. As discussed in section G below, this must be done early and strategically, prior to implementation of the flexible workplace programme at United Nations Headquarters.

G. Critical factors for successful implementation

24. Drawing from the lessons learned from the implementation of flexible workplace initiatives at other organizations, the United Nations can anticipate a number of factors to be critical to the successful implementation of a flexible workplace, as described below:

(a) Visibility of support by senior leadership: flexible workplace initiatives at other large organizations have revealed a direct and strong correlation between the success of the initiative and the visibility of senior leadership support for flexible working;

(b) Clear communication of the flexible workplace vision: communicating the vision of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters so that can be understood and supported by staff will require a clear articulation of the driving purpose behind the programme, definition of its potential scale and clarity regarding the organizational, operational and financial needs that the programme must satisfy;

(c) Adjusting the United Nations Headquarters culture to a flexible workplace: achieving a successful flexible workplace environment requires rethinking how and where people work. As also observed during engagement within the Secretariat as part of the study on a flexible workplace, there is a risk that those who oppose the existing flexible working arrangements policy promulgated in the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2003/4 will, in some instances, take a stand against a flexible workplace programme without understanding that it is distinct (even if complementary) to flexible working arrangements. As explained in paragraph 4, the latter constitute a human resource policy that permits compressed work schedules and telecommuting, among other features.

25. In order to further develop a vision for a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters and to determine an achievable scope and pace for implementation, a workshop was organized of senior representatives across the United Nations Secretariat. Participants reflected on changes needed to the existing organizational culture and procedures to enable the Organization to work more effectively. In addition they specifically highlighted a number of limitations of the current workspace that could be addressed through the implementation of a flexible workplace.

III. Pilot implementation

A. Pilot guiding principles

26. In order to test the application of a flexible workplace in a United Nations working environment, a pilot programme was developed and implemented on the 18th and 19th floors of the Secretariat Building. The pilot, which is ongoing, involves 128 staff from the Strategic Planning and Staffing Division of the Office of Human Resources Management.

27. In keeping with the principles of flexible workplace strategies, the pilot programme is not exclusively about office space. Rather, in order to maximize effectiveness, the participating staff and the reconfigured workspace are supported by the appropriate orientation, training and technology to enable participating staff to work flexibly. The pilot is about learning, adjustment and modification. It has been an opportunity for staff to voice their needs and opinions about how the new environment responds to them. It is also a chance not only to gain more insight into how work is performed, but also to test new configurations and technologies. Given that the pilot is an important part of shaping the future Secretariat workplace it is imperative that the resulting satisfaction measurements be recorded and analysed.

B. Research design

28. In the pilot programme, a variety of new space types are being explored, with the aim of enhancing the daily work experience. Table 2 describes the various space types being tested as part of the pilot.

Table 2
Pilot space types and functions

Space type	*Description*
Reception	The reception is an attractive place to welcome guests to the pilot space. Staff can have access to the booking system, where they can either do ad hoc check-in or locate colleagues on the floor.
Quiet zone	The quiet zone is designed for individual, heads-down work without fully isolating users from co-workers and the activity in the workplace.
Collaboration zone	The collaboration zone accommodates teams and collaborative interaction.
Meeting suite	Meeting suites are ideal for larger, more formal meetings or for smaller meetings that require privacy because of sensitive materials or subject matter.
Director/meeting suite	The director/meeting suites act as offices while directors are present, but the space can be reserved in their absence.

Space type	*Description*
Work lounge	With pantry/kitchen facilities and plenty of table space, the work lounge can function as a place for a break, a meeting or both. Surfaces at a variety of heights allow for standing and/or seated work. When staff are not working, the work lounge is a place to relax and socialize.
Focus booth	Focus booths are single-user, enclosed spaces that are intended for highly focused, heads-down work and/or phone or video calls.
Library	The library is a quiet space where common files and other departmental resources can be accessed.

29. The Strategic Planning and Staffing Division of the Office of Human Resources Management was the first group to pilot a flexible workplace environment. Originally, the Division was split between the Secretariat Building and DC-1. In 2014, the Division also needed to accommodate a new team working on mobility. By participating in the flexible workplace pilot, the Division was able to relocate the Examinations and Testing Section, which was formerly based in DC-1, into the Secretariat Building This enabled the Section to synchronize its work to a greater extent with the operations of the Strategic Planning and Staffing Division. It also enabled the mobility team to be co-located with the rest of the Division. In October 2014, approximately 60 Strategic Planning and Staffing Division staff moved into space on part of the 18th floor of the Secretariat Building that had been reconfigured to pilot flexible workplace. The remaining Division staff moved to the 19th floor in December 2014.

30. Owing to their increased need for collaboration, staff of the Division were provided with access to the new space types listed in table 2. All participants in the pilot were equipped with a managed laptop and a smartphone and had the flexibility to choose how and where they worked within the pilot workspace area depending on their work requirements at the time and their personal work style.

31. Workspaces in the quiet zone, the collaboration zone, the meeting suites and the focus booths were equipped with ergonomic chairs, dual computer monitors, a keyboard and mouse, a desk phone and a powered docking station with a local area network connection for the participants' laptops. In other spaces there was also access to power and Ethernet ports. Wi-Fi was available in all corners of the floor.

C. Setting the scene and stages of change

32. In order to prepare participants for the new style of working in advance of its launch, several meetings and town hall sessions were held with Division staff and management. The meetings focused on explaining the flexible workplace concepts and providing guidance for users, managers and supervisors. In addition, there were small focus group discussions, interviews and information sharing through weekly meetings and through the Unite Connections community of practice established for the pilot programme.

D. Findings and conclusions from the pilot, including feedback provided by participants

33. A number of mechanisms were established to allow participants in the pilot to provide feedback and discuss their experience with the flexible workplace. These include the Unite Connections community set up for the pilot programme, pre- and post-occupancy surveys, interviews, focus group discussions and space utilization observation.

34. The overall experience as reported by pilot participants thus far is positive. At an early stage of the pilot, all 60 participants on the 18th floor at the time were asked their preference. Of the 35 responses, 16 preferred the pilot space, 8 preferred the space before the pilot and 11 had no preference. Participants expressed support for the new technology, the more frequent interaction with colleagues and the flexibility to choose where to work. Most staff expressed enthusiastic support for the much greater exposure to natural light provided by the more open plan design of the reconfigured workspace used for the pilot. Participants also provided valuable feedback regarding aspects of the pilot programme's workspace that could be improved in the event that flexible workplace were to be implemented more broadly in the Secretariat. The key findings and conclusions drawn from the pilot thus far are presented below.

Seating assignment

35. Staff are not assigned to one specific work seat in the pilot area, but rather to the entire office space being used, and can use every space, including the Director's office when it is not in use. More people are assigned to the space than there are seats. The pilot used a 0.81 to 1.00 seat-to-person ratio (81 work seats for 100 staff). Accordingly, the seats are "shared" on an as-needed basis. The pilot analysis revealed that the unassigned seating aspect was generally adopted quickly and with relatively little difficulty. In addition, participants grew accustomed to setting up and clearing their workspace at the beginning and end of each work day. Some occupants expressed a clear preference for an assigned seat, as they could personalize their space and this arrangement afforded them privacy by default. Overall, however, it has been concluded that unassigned seating could be rolled out to much of the United Nations Headquarters population.

36. In the light of the above, and given that seat sharing is an integral element of a flexible workplace programme, a seat-sharing ratio of less than 1 to 1 can be implemented.

Typical workspace size

37. Typical individual workspaces in the pilot were relatively small because they were intended to support the predominant tasks taking place at the individual workspace, such as computer-based work and talking on the telephone. These two were the most frequently observed activities in occupied work seats during the activity analysis. Each department has a different mix of requirements. Workspace would therefore need to be adjusted during implementation to reflect those requirements.

Density (number of seats in the pilot space)

38. With the new seat-to-person ratio, the number of occupants on the floor increased from its original configuration. During the planning for the pilot, this aspect was one of the most often cited concerns from the participants. After they moved into the reconfigured space, however, occupants said that the space never felt crowded. Nevertheless, there were complaints regarding the noise from conversations in the open area. It was determined by staff that this matter would need to be dealt with as part of the flexible workplace etiquette, which would be addressed within the Division.

Space types

39. Of the various space types available in the pilot area, participants indicated that they would like more focus booths, but that the acoustics in the booths should be improved. The lounges were well regarded but sporadically occupied. This suggests that lounges should be included on the floors but with a smaller footprint. The library was reported as being used as an enclosed collaborative space, but rarely as a library. Staff also expressed the need to have more storage space for bulkier personal items such as a change of clothes, umbrellas, boots, large jackets and other outerwear.

Technology

40. With a personal information technology package (laptop and smart phone), communal audiovisual facilities and an increased number of network access points in the lounge areas, participants have the flexibility to work anywhere on the floor. After an adjustment period, participating staff from the Division gained a good command of using personal and team information technology equipment. Participants expressed support for the mobility that laptop computers afforded them in choosing where to work.

41. Officials from other offices and departments in New York and visiting officials from other duty stations, having seen the pilot and talked with participants, have expressed considerable interest in implementing a flexible workplace programme in their locations. Their interest often stems from a desire to embrace modern, more effective ways of working. Furthermore, many offices and duty stations are faced with space challenges, such as demand-driven surge staffing when, for example, they are called upon to accommodate ad hoc teams dealing with specific crises. Flexible workplace often offers ways to address such challenges without having to seek additional space.

E. Space efficiency as demonstrated by the pilot

42. The space on the 18th and 19th floors of the Secretariat that is being used for the pilot had 84 work seats (72 assigned spaces and 12 touchdown spaces) before the pilot. Through reconfiguration, 21 work seats were added to the same space, for a new total seat count of 105. The flexible workplace concept takes into consideration the number of staff absentees, staff who are traveling or in training, posts under recruitment, staff in meetings at any given time and transient occupants, such as interns and consultants. The pilot has shown that 128 staff can operate comfortably in a space with 105 work seats. In addition to the space efficiency

gained on the 18th and 19th floors, which is illustrated in table 3 below, 15 work seats in DC-1 can now be assigned to other departments.

Table 3
Space efficiency gained during the pilot

Design	*Work seats*	*Capacity*	*Space efficiency gained (percentage)*
Original[a]	84	84	–
After flexible workplace reconfiguration[b]	105	105	25
After application of the new seat-sharing ratio	105	128	52

[a] Cubicle, office and touchdown space.
[b] Work seats.

IV. Business case findings and conclusions

A. Findings of the pilot programme, study and survey

43. Though implemented in a small area, findings from the pilot and the study answered fundamental questions regarding the applicability of flexible workplace strategies to United Nations Headquarters. the key conclusions from the pilot programme as well as the study are as follows:

(a) The pilot study was largely successful. Early feedback indicates that with some modifications, such as planning for more and improved individual quiet spaces for this specific group, a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters can be successful;

(b) By providing staff with workplace choice, flexibility and more access to natural light, a flexible workplace programme can improve the overall quality of the workplace experience at the United Nations;

(c) The United Nations, at least at Headquarters, can avoid significant long-term commercial real estate lease requirements through space efficiencies gained by implementing a flexible workplace programme. However, an up-front investment is required;

(d) In net terms, the one-time implementation and recurrent operating costs of flexible workplace strategies are modest relative to the long-term savings from the real estate that flexible workplace arrangements would enable the United Nations Headquarters to vacate;

(e) The existing technology infrastructure provides a solid foundation for implementing a flexible workplace when augmented by both ongoing technology initiatives, such as Umoja and the Unite Connections suite, which provide platforms for collaboration accessible over the local area network and the Internet, and new strategic investments enabling individual workplace mobility, such as laptops and mobile phones;

(f) Successful flexible workplace implementation is dependent upon a cultural change that embraces new ways of working, managing and planning. Among the required changes is a shift away from space allocation based on hierarchy towards an approach which takes into account functional requirements;

(g) Readiness for the changes necessary to implement flexible working varies widely from person to person and across departments, offices and divisions. While this is common, it highlights the need to implement a comprehensive engagement and change management programme.

B. Qualitative benefits of a flexible workplace

44. By enabling smarter ways of working, a flexible workplace can have significant benefits for individuals and for the Organization as a whole. Benefits to the individual include having more choice about where and how to work. Increased trust and empowerment from managers will have a positive impact on staff motivation and morale. A flexible workplace environment fosters collaboration and interaction with colleagues and reduces frustration about the barriers that hinder effective working.[1] A vibrant, energetic working environment can enhance job satisfaction and enjoyment of the workplace.

45. Flexible working can enable the United Nations to increase connectivity and collaboration across the Organization regardless of location. Other benefits identified by organizations that have implemented a flexible workplace include more effective knowledge and information sharing among staff, better organizational resilience, reduced absenteeism, improved retention of staff, enhancement of the reputation of the Organization and improved ability to attract high-calibre recruits.

C. Quantitative benefits of flexible workplace

46. Improved space efficiency from a flexible workplace translates directly into savings on real estate and improved environmental sustainability. There is potentially a modest offset resulting from increased utilities and cleaning costs, as spaces that are utilized for a greater proportion of the working day would consume marginally more utilities and could require more frequent cleaning. It should be noted, however, that feedback from cleaning staff during the Secretariat pilot indicated that flexible workspaces were easier to clean, as staff have to clear away all files and possessions when they vacate a workspace. In comparison with flexible workplace initiatives at other organizations, the proposed implementation at United Nations Headquarters is not expected to result in significant increases in operating costs.

[1] In the survey described in paragraphs 21 and 22, staff expressed frustration with the physical separations created by the allocation of space on a hierarchical basis, which results in social separation and hinders collaboration.

D. Comparison of project costs for proposed implementation at Headquarters and anticipated reduction in long-term commercial rental costs

47. The total estimated project cost for the implementation of flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters proposed in the present report, as explained in paragraphs 68 to 78, is $49.6 million (see table 8 and annex I for details). It is anticipated that the implementation of such strategies would result in a reduction of 18 per cent in the overall office space portfolio at United Nations Headquarters. The total estimated project costs can be compared to an estimated reduction of 18.1 million in 2018 and $19.8 million in annual commercial lease rental costs from 2018[2] onwards, once the Secretariat relinquishes the leases for three commercial buildings it currently occupies in New York. The three buildings in question are the Daily News Building, the Albano Building and the Court Square Building. The leases for these buildings will expire in 2017 and early 2018. With the successful implementation of flexible workplace strategies, the Secretariat will not renew the leases. Following the implementation of the flexible workplace strategies, the number of staff in off-campus leased space would still justify the proposed long-term accommodation options under consideration (see A/68/734).

48. Details of the anticipated annual lease and operating costs for 2016 and the lease expiry dates for each of the three buildings to be vacated are shown in the table 4.

Table 4
Lease costs, operating costs and lease expiry dates
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Building	*Annual lease cost (2016)*	*Annual operational costs (2016)*	*Total annual cost (2016)*[a]	*Lease expiry dates*
Daily News Building	2 947.8	366.2	3 314.0	April 2017
Albano Building	10 099.7	1 962.7	12 062.4	January 2018
Court Square Building	3 439.9	970.8	4 410.7	February 2018
Total	**16 487.4**	**3 299.7**	**19 787.1**	

[a] On a pro-rata basis of the 2016 annual costs shown above, the cost for the Albano Building and the Court Square Building for January and February 2018 is $1.7 million.

49. The full cost of the project would be offset by the reduction in rent and maintenance by 2020. Thereafter, an annual rent and maintenance reduction of $19.8 million would be achieved.

[2] The estimated reduction in annual commercial lease rental costs for 2018 amounts to $18.1 million, which reflects the costs for the Albano and Court Square Buildings, which will continue to be occupied in January and February of that year ($19.8 million less $1.7 million).

V. Strategy and support for a flexible workplace programme

50. A well-defined and successful flexible workplace programme at United Nations Headquarters will involve modernization of working practices to take a coherent and integrated approach to staff management, technology and workspace and provision of appropriate support through staff engagement, training and leadership. In order to meet organizational aims of giving employees greater choice over how and where they work, the flexible workplace programme needs to be aligned to the specific organizational requirements and culture. This often requires new behaviours and skills and involves different expectations about how work is done.

A. Human resources management support system

51. As noted previously, the implementation of a flexible workplace involves much more than altering the physical space in the office. It requires a more modern and proactive approach to human resources management.

52. Ongoing communications with staff are needed in order to assess and enhance staff morale, well-being and satisfaction with the physical workplace. The United Nations should publicize its flexible working practices and include technology orientation in its recruitment programme.

53. The existing flexible working arrangements policy (see ST/SGB/2003/4) offers participating staff options to adjust their work schedule and location, with the express goal of improving the balance between the professional and personal lives of the staff of the Secretariat. A flexible working programme and flexible working arrangements are not dependent on each other but should be strategically coordinated for maximum, complementary benefit.

B. Information technology support, personal and corporate strategy

54. A key component of flexible working is the level of ease with which staff can move through the new office environment. The upgrading of technology and its integration into the flexible workplace programme is essential to achieving the desired flexibility and a high-quality work environment.

55. A detailed assessment of the current United Nations information and communications technology system reveals that the Organization has a strong foundation to deliver a meaningful change to the workplace. The following steps are necessary for the Secretariat to move towards a flexible workplace:

(a) Provide users with access to the most up-to-date versions of current Mobile Office applications;

(b) Deploy a secure corporate Wi-Fi network;

(c) Promote and adopt Office of Information and Communications Technology Unite services, including Unite Docs, Unite Connections and Unite Drive, across all departments to allow mobile and remote accessibility to all business critical documentation;

(d) Standardize audio and video equipment and services in the meeting room suites to allow for consistent user experience across the campus;

(e) Ensure the required level of information technology security necessary for flexible working. Activities to be undertaken include work on the intrusion detection system and strengthening monitoring of malware and other technology attacks.

C. Communications approach

56. The success of flexible workplace strategies is most closely linked to the ability of the Organization to shift its culture in support of new ways of working. Such cultural shifts involve every organizational level and are challenging to initiate and influence, but they are absolutely essential to successful implementation of a flexible workplace programme.

57. At this stage, many of the changes required for a flexible workplace to succeed have been determined. The driving factors and stakeholders have also been identified.

D. Space planning and reconfiguration

58. Through a series of interviews, staff engagement, observation of current work space and analysis of survey results, six main space types have been identified for Headquarters. Each of the six space types comprise specific furniture and components. The proposed new space types are set out in table 5 below.

Table 5
Proposed new space types

Space type: enclosed focus **Components: offices, focus rooms/phone rooms** Interviews and analysis of activity indicate that when United Nations staff are at their work seats, they spend most of their time on concentrated individual tasks. Enclosed focus space is enclosed and isolated space where staff can go to perform tasks that require concentration. Proposed space standards for the flexible working environment include an increased amount of enclosed focus space equipped with the proper technology and tools.
Space type: open focus **Components: integrated mobile desk, touchdown desk** Open focus space makes up the majority of the space in the proposed flexible working floor plan. There are two components that make up open focus space: unassigned integrated desks and temporary-use touchdown desks. The difference between these two components is the amount of time each desk is to be used. A touchdown should only be used for a short period of time, while the integrated desk can be used for an entire day. Low panels and close proximity to storage and to enclosed focus space are necessary for open focus space to be successful.

Space type: enclosed collaboration
Components: meeting rooms, team rooms

Enclosed collaboration space is used by teams. It is enclosed and equipped with tools to enable collaborative interaction, including monitors and videoconferencing, and voiceconferencing technology.

In the flexible working floor plan, the two components that make up enclosed collaboration spaces are meeting rooms and team rooms. Meetings rooms are more formal and typically have more powerful technology tools. Team rooms are more informal meeting spaces typically used for small internal collaboration work and can feature more comfortable furniture options, such as lounge seating.

Space type: open collaboration
Components: Open teaming areas and work cafe spaces

Open collaboration spaces are considered to be less formal spaces for employees to meet quickly for projects or occasional socializing. In the current United Nations workplace, open collaboration is the space type most lacking across all buildings. The proposed open collaboration space components include open teaming and work cafe spaces.

Open teaming areas have the necessary furniture to support an informal meeting, including a work surface and multiple seats. The work cafe features more comfortable seating, but can still be used for work.

Space type: enclosed resource
Components: print/copy room, file/storage room

Enclosed resource spaces are enclosed and accommodate work tools and resources. Currently, the United Nations has sufficient enclosed resources. These spaces would continue being used in a flexible working floor plan.

The components include print/copy rooms and file/storage rooms. The print/copy rooms would be designed to fully meet the printing and copying needs of the employees, with proper storage, machinery and recycling/disposal services. The file/storage rooms contain the storage furniture to accommodate the files and specific needs of each department. Storage rooms are particularly important as a place for staff to store their personal belongings when they no longer have permanently assigned desks.

Space type: open resources
Space type components: pantry, open filing/storage

Open resources are especially important in a flexible workplace floor plan because resources have been made communal.

The components include a pantry and open filing/storage. Under the proposed flexible working plan, a clear open resources strategy will allow staff quick and convenient access to lockers/personal storage near their workspaces. Pantry facilities are placed near open collaboration space to allow staff interaction and socializing.

59. Flexible workplace solutions would be customized to operational requirements within each department, resulting in unique combinations of the proposed new space types for each planning profile.

VI. Integration of a flexible workplace with other initiatives

A. Umoja

60. The alignment of a flexible workplace with Umoja was described in the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/68/387 para. 41). It was noted that the concept of flexible workplace strategies aligned closely with other transformative initiatives currently under way in the United Nations, foremost among them the efforts to create a more mobile workforce and the deployment of Umoja. Umoja transcends organizational, geographical and functional barriers, fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, empowerment, sharing and unity across the United Nations. Umoja will allow transactions to be performed with a high degree of consistency, quality, security and control by authorized staff at United Nations locations across the world. As staff will be able to draw on the common enterprise resource planning platform and execute many workflows in a harmonized and location-independent manner, the deployment of Umoja will be conducive to flexible working. While both programmes are seen as complementary, they do not depend on one other. The roll-out of Umoja is not a pre-requisite for a flexible workplace, nor is a flexible workplace required for the roll-out of Umoja.

B. Strategic heritage plan

61. A dedicated project manager from the strategic heritage plan team participated in the interdisciplinary working group as the pilot was being developed and implemented on the 18th and 19th floors of the Secretariat Building. As part of the implementation plan, the strategic heritage plan team will consider how various flexible workplace strategies may be applied at the United Nations Office at Geneva. A more efficient use of existing office space would allow for additional United Nations staff currently located in Geneva to be accommodated in the Palais des Nations.

C. Sustainability

62. Since 2008, and in line with the strategy for a climate-neutral United Nations, the Secretariat has been part of an inter-agency network to promote environmentally sustainable management of United Nations workplaces worldwide. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Member States called on the United Nations system to improve the management of its facilities and operations by taking into account sustainable development practices, building on existing efforts and promoting cost-effectiveness (see General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, para. 96). The flexible workplace programme would form part of the response to that call.

D. Organizational resilience management system

63. Mobile work, as envisaged as part of the flexible workplace, would form part of the structured maintenance, exercise and review regime of the organizational resilience management system, supporting efforts to further strengthen business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities. As outlined in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Organizational resilience management system: emergency management framework" (A/67/266), telecommuting and the ability to remotely execute critical functions are key capacities necessary for Secretariat staff to effectively respond to emergencies and are therefore essential for the implementation of the organizational resilience management system.

VII. Implementation plan for flexible workplace at Headquarters

64. An analysis of the projected space efficiencies that the implementation of a flexible workplace at Headquarters would achieve is shown in table 6. It is estimated that 800 additional staff could be accommodated in the Secretariat Building and 150 additional staff in the FF Building.

Table 6
Projected space efficiency gains

Building	*Design*	*Work seats*	*Capacity*	*Space efficiency gain (percentage)*
Secretariat Building (26 floors, including 206 touchdown spaces)	Original	2 459	2 459	–
	After flexible workplace reconfiguration	2 607	2 607	6
	After application of the new seat-sharing ratio (0.8:1)	2 607	3 259	33
FF Building (8 floors)	Original	558	558	–
	After flexible workplace reconfiguration	566	566	1.4
	After application of the new seat-sharing ratio (0.8:1)	566	708	27

65. After detailed consideration of the current United Nations Headquarters real estate portfolio and the space efficiencies that can be achieved through implementation of a flexible workplace, it has been determined that it would be a desirable and achievable objective to vacate the Albano, Daily News and Court Square Buildings by the time their current leases expire. The lease expiry dates for those buildings are shown in table 7.

Table 7
Lease expiry dates

Building	*Lease expiry date*
Albano Building	January 2018
Court Square Building	February 2018
Daily News Building	April 2017

66. The proposed implementation plan involves the conversion of 26 floors of the Secretariat Building and 8 floors of the FF Building to a flexible workplace configuration. If the General Assembly approves the proposed implementation plan, preliminary planning and preparatory work would begin in April 2015. Construction work in the Secretariat Building to convert floors to flexible workplace configurations would start in September 2015, with projected completion in late 2017. The conversion of the 26 floors of the Secretariat Building would create additional capacity for approximately 800 staff. The FF Building would then be converted to a flexible workplace configuration, creating additional capacity for approximately 150 staff. It is projected that the construction work on the FF Building would be completed in February 2018. The additional capacity would allow the Daily News and Court Square Buildings to be vacated when the leases end in April 2017 and February 2018, respectively. The newly converted FF Building would be able to receive all staff from the Albano Building when its lease terminates in February 2018. As for the renovation of the Secretariat Building, even though additional space capacity will be created, construction of internal swing space is necessary to accommodate the staff moves required for the implementation plan, as follows:

(a) **Fit-out swing space as a flexible workplace (April 2015 to August 2015).** Before the Secretariat Building can be converted into a flexible workplace, the Secretariat Building basements would need to be converted into a swing space area;

(b) **Reconfigure Secretariat Building into a flexible workplace (September 2015 to August 2017).** During the first year of the Secretariat reconfiguration, through flexible workplace renovations, an initial additional capacity for approximately 300 staff will be created in the Secretariat Building. Full reconfiguration of the 26 floors in the Secretariat Building, resulting in additional capacity for 800 staff, is estimated to be completed by August 2017;

(c) **Vacate Daily News and FF Buildings (September 2016 to August 2017).** As additional space is created in the Secretariat Building, staff from other buildings (DC-1, DC-2, Innovation, FF and Daily News) would occupy this new space on their assigned floors in the Secretariat Building. Simultaneously, staff from the FF Building would move into other buildings (Secretariat, DC-1, DC-2, and Innovation) to make room for renovations. The Daily News Building would be vacated by the lease expiry date (April 2017);

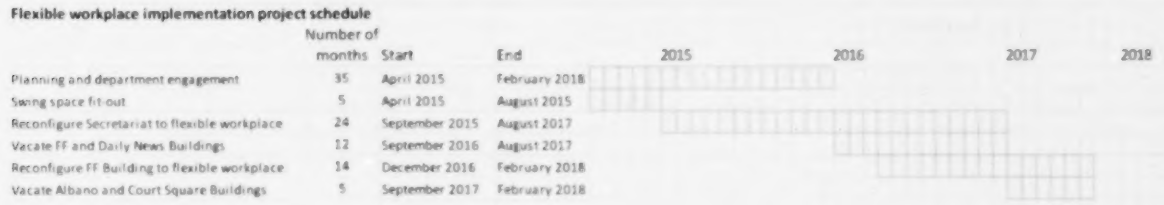
(d) **Reconfigure the FF Building into a flexible workplace (December 2016 to February 2018).** By the end of 2016, the FF Building would be fully vacated and would be renovated with flexible workplace configurations. The expected time to complete the reconfiguration is 14 months;

(e) **Vacate Albano and Court Square Buildings (September 2016 to August 2017).** As part of the FF Building is reconfigured and space becomes available, half of the staff from the Albano Building would move into the renovated space while the remaining staff would move temporarily into swing space in the Secretariat and other buildings where pockets of space have been vacated prior to the termination of the Albano Building lease (January 2018). When the remainder of the floors in the FF Building have been reconfigured, the staff in swing space would move into the renovated building. Similarly, staff in the Court Square Building

would be able to vacate prior to the building's lease expiry (February 2018) into available space in other buildings.

67. An overview of the project schedule is set out in figure 2.

Figure 2
Project schedule



VIII. Estimated project cost for implementation of a flexible workplace at Headquarters

68. The estimated project costs of implementing a flexible workplace at Headquarters is summarized by activity in table 8. A detailed year-by-year breakdown of the estimated cost is provided in annex I.

Table 8
Estimated project cost by activity
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Project activity	*Estimated cost 2015-2018*
Planning and design services	500.0
Secretariat Building reconfiguration/renovation	31 366.8
FF Building reconfiguration/renovation	13 335.7
Swing space	2 305.9
Additional moves	715.0
Subtotal, flexible workplace reconfiguration/implementation	**48 223.4**
Subtotal, project supervision and management	**1 375.2**
Total	**49 598.6**

69. The proposed implementation of a flexible workplace at Headquarters would cost an estimated $49,598,600, comprising planning and design services ($500,000) Secretariat Building reconfiguration costs ($31,366,800), FF Building reconfiguration costs ($13,335,700), the initial swing space fit-out and operation cost ($2,305,900), the cost of additional staff moves to off-campus buildings (outside the flexible workplace scope) ($715,000) and the cost of the project team ($1,375,200), as detailed below.

Phase planning ($500,000)

70. An initial $500,000 for consultant fees for the detailed planning and design phase are required at the beginning of the project to develop a tailored implementation approach that meets the specific needs of individual departments and offices.

Estimated Secretariat Building reconfiguration and implementation costs ($31,366,800)

71. The total cost of reconfiguration for these buildings is based on an estimated unit cost per square foot/metre, which was calculated for the Secretariat and FF Buildings inclusive of programming, construction and personal and corporate information and communications technology solutions, as detailed below. The estimated cost of the reconfiguration of the Secretariat Building is $24,497,600, based on estimated costs of $64.32 per square foot ($692 per square metre) for 380,869 square feet (35,384 square metres). This cost assumes mainly light construction and furniture solutions. The cost of construction ($35 per square foot or $377 per square metre) would primarily include new gypsum board walls and possibly glass office fronts. Considering the recent renovation of the Secretariat, this cost assumes no mechanical, plumbing, electrical or demolition work. The estimate includes a small amount of millwork, carpeting (for additional rooms), paint, hardware and fabric panels. The furniture cost is estimated at $24 per square foot ($258 per square metre), including allowance for audiovisual equipment. The soft cost fee ($5.32 per square foot or $57 per square metre) includes permits, building charges and the construction and design team fee.

72. The estimated Secretariat Building implementation costs of $6,869,200 would cover the cabling set-up, docking station and double monitors, as well as other technology costs, including laptops, mobile devices and accessories ($5,859,200). It also includes $1,010,000 for the internal swing space movements of staff already in the Secretariat Building.

Estimated FF Building reconfiguration and implementation costs ($13,335,700)

73. The estimated FF Building reconfiguration costs amount to $11,957,100, based on estimated cost of $168.47 per square foot ($1,814 per square metre) for 70,975 square feet (6,594 square metres). This cost assumes full construction and furniture renovation for the FF Building, as it is an older building. The existing building will require a large amount of demolition for offices along the perimeter and additional pantries. There is assumed cost for mechanical, electrical, sprinkler, and plumbing work, though it is unclear to what extent this will be necessary. The construction cost ($100 per square foot, or $1,076 per square metre) assumes provisions for millwork, carpeting, tile and window treatments. The furniture cost ($30 per square foot, or $323 per square metre) assumes all new furniture solutions, with consideration of possible reuse of furniture from the Secretariat Building. The soft cost fee ($18.47 per square foot, or $199 per square metre) represents the construction/design team fee and any additional specialty construction, including mechanical, electrical, structural, audiovisual, kitchen and lighting work.

74. The estimated FF Building implementation costs of $1,378,600 would cover the cabling set-up, docking station and double monitors, as well as other technology costs, including laptops, mobile devices and accessories.

Swing space ($2,305,900)

75. The initial fit-out of 20,000 square feet (1,858 square metres) in the basement of the Secretariat Building would be done at the beginning of the project and would have a cost per square foot of $64.32, for a total cost of $1,287,000. In addition, $1,018,900 is required for maintaining, cleaning and ensuring operations of this space during the three years of the project.

Additional staff moves ($715,000)

76. As departments are consolidated in the newly renovated buildings, some staff would be required to move to swing space within existing buildings that are outside of the flexible workplace scope. The total estimated cost for those additional moves is $715,000.

Project management team ($1,375,200)

77. Estimated resources of $1,375,200 would be required for a project management team during the implementation of the flexible workplace project for the period from April 2015 to February 2018, comprised of one P-5 Project Manager, one P-4 Design and Construction Manager and one General Service (Other level) staff member. Further details on the project team are provided below.

IX. Proposed funding for the project

A. Funding approach

78. As described in section VIII and reflected in annex I, the proposed implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters will require resources in the amount of $49.6 million over three years. During this period, as described in paragraphs 47 to 49 and illustrated in table 4, the Secretary-General intends to relinquish leases as they expire on three commercial properties. There would be an opportunity to apply future savings in rental costs (after the renovation has been completed) to fund the project, although this presents a cash-flow timing issue.

79. At this stage, the Secretary-General requests approval of the proposed scope of the flexible workplace project at United Nations Headquarters and commitment authority for 2015 costs and authority to use the Working Capital Fund and the Special Account established by the General Assembly in its resolution 3049 A (XXVII) in the amount of $5.8 million (see sect. IX.B below) on a cash-flow basis.

80. The Secretary-General intends to present a funding proposal for the overall project costs (i.e. an additional $43.8 million for 2016 to 2018) in his next progress report, to be submitted at the main part of the seventieth session of the General Assembly. The proposal will take into account the future savings in rental costs to fund the project. In this regard, it should be noted that the costs of the project could be recuperated by 2020.

B. Resource requirements for the biennium 2014-2015

81. Resource requirements for the implementation of flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters as described above for the biennium 2014-2015 would amount to $5,819,000. The estimated cost during 2015 for the proposed implementation of a flexible workplace is summarized in tables 9 and 10. Resource requirements for 2015 include the proposed establishment of three general temporary assistance positions (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 General Service (Other level)), contractual services and furniture and equipment costs.

Table 9
Resource requirements for 2015 by project activity
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Project activity	*Estimated requirements*
Planning and design services	500.0
Secretariat Building reconfiguration/renovation	3 516.4
Swing space	1 422.8
Additional moves	26.2
Project supervision and management	353.6
Total	**5 819.0**

Table 10
Resource requirements for 2015 by object of expenditure
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Object of expenditure	*Estimated requirements*
Other staff costs	353.6
Contractual services	2 599.1
Furniture and equipment	2 866.3
Total	**5 819.0**

Other staff costs ($353,600)

82. Resource requirements of $353,600 would cover the cost of a dedicated project management team through the establishment, effective April 2015, of three positions funded under general temporary assistance. The implementation of flexible workplace strategies would require the temporary addition of dedicated resources to assist the Facilities Management Service in the Office of Central Support Services for the duration of implementation. These would comprise one Project Manager (P-5) to conduct overall planning and change management and to engage with departments to develop the necessary detailed plans and one Design and Construction Manager (P-4) to handle the overall space design and construction works, supported by an Administrative Assistant (General Service (Other level)) to assist with administrative tasks of the project.

Contractual services ($2,599,100)

83. Resource requirements of $2,599,100 would cover project programme planning and design services ($500,000), architectural design services for swing space ($106,500), construction for swing space ($480,200), swing space cleaning and operating costs ($135,900), architectural design services for Secretariat Building space ($226,000), construction for Secretariat Building space ($1,019,600), moves between the Secretariat Building and swing space ($104,700) and moves between off-campus buildings ($26,200).

Furniture and equipment ($2,866,300)

84. Resource requirements of $2,866,300 would cover furniture for swing space ($700,300), furniture for Secretariat Building space ($1,487,000), Secretariat Building information technology workstation equipment ($181,600) and information technology equipment for staff moving back into Secretariat space ($497,400).

X. Implementation of flexible workplace strategies at other duty stations

85. To assist other duty stations in implementing flexible workplace strategies, the expert consultant team was tasked with developing guidance documents regarding how the whole process at United Nations Headquarters was conducted and how it can be repeated. This guidance document is referred to as the kit of parts. In the light of the high proportion of commercially leased space at New York Headquarters and the planning of the strategic heritage plan, the immediate focus has been on implementation at those two locations. The kit of parts guidance will be further developed and refined using lessons learned as New York and Geneva proceed and could be applied to projects being planned at other duty stations as part of the strategic capital review.

XI. Next steps

86. If the proposed implementation plan is approved by the General Assembly, the Secretariat will immediately:

(a) Proceed with detailed planning and preparatory work for the proposed implementation plan;

(b) Commit the resources required for the year 2015, as detailed above;

(c) In parallel with the detailed planning efforts, embark on a comprehensive change management process to engage departments, hear their concerns, educate them on flexible working and refine the implementation plans to the necessary level of detail;

(d) Continue regular engagement with staff representatives and all relevant stakeholders;

(e) Continue to work closely with the United Nations Office at Geneva and other interested duty stations.

87. The outcome of the next steps will be reported to the General Assembly at the main part of its seventieth session as part of the progress report of the Secretary-General.

XII. Recommended actions to be taken by the General Assembly

88. **The General Assembly is requested to:**

(a) **Take note of the progress made since the issuance of the last report on a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters;**

(b) **Approve the next steps for the implementation of flexible workplace strategies at the United Nations, as described in section XI of the present report;**

(c) **Approve the proposed scope of the United Nations Headquarters flexible workplace project, as described in section VII of the present report, including its implementation schedule for the period from 2015 to 2018 inclusive;**

(d) **Approve the establishment of three temporary positions (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 General Service (Other level)) with effect from 1 April 2015;**

(e) **Authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments up to the amount of $5,819,000 in respect of the project costs through 2015, as set out in table 10 of the report;**

(f) **Authorize the Secretary-General, on an exceptional basis, to make use of the Working Capital Fund and the Special Account established by the General Assembly in its resolution 3049 A (XXVII) to fund the United Nations Headquarters flexible workplace project in the amount of $5,819,000 on a cash-flow basis;**

(g) **Recognize the need to maintain the robust liquidity of the Organization, and request the Secretary-General to keep Member States informed with regard to its liquidity, as appropriate;**

(h) **Request the Secretary-General to submit his next report on flexible workplace strategies at the United Nations to the General Assembly at the main part of its seventieth session and to present the estimated remaining project costs for 2016, 2017 and 2018 and the funding modalities.**

Annex I

Estimated project cost by year for implementation of a flexible workplace at Headquarters

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Project activity	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*	*2018*	*Total*
Planning and design services	500.0	–	–	–	500.0
Secretariat Building reconfiguration/renovation	3 516.4	18 303.8	9 546.6	–	31 366.8
FF Building reconfiguration/renovation	–	591.2	11 704.3	1 040.2	13 335.7
Swing space	1 422.8	407.6	407.6	67.9	2 305.9
Additional moves	26.2	240.8	355.3	92.7	715.0
Subtotal, flexible workplace reconfiguration/implementation	**5 465.4**	**19 543.4**	**22 013.8**	**1 200.8**	**48 223.4**
Subtotal, project supervision and management	**353.6**	**471.5**	**471.5**	**78.6**	**1 375.2**
Total	**5 819.0**	**20 014.9**	**22 485.3**	**1 279.4**	**49 598.6**

Annex II

Fit-out costs (per square foot) for the Secretariat Building and the FF Building

Secretariat Building fit-out costs

(United States dollars)

Activity	*Cost per square foot*
Furniture (includes allowance for audiovisual equipment)	35.00
Light construction	24.00
Architectural woodwork	
Hollow metal hardware	
Architectural metal and glass	
Drywall and carpentry	
Lath and acoustics	
Carpet/vinyl composition tile/base trim	
Paint/wallcovering	
Fabric panels	
Permits	0.50
Building charges	0.50
Soft costs: design, construction consultants fees	4.32
Total, Secretariat Building fit-out cost	**64.32**

FF Building fit-out costs

(United States dollars)

Activity	*Cost per square foot*
Furniture	30.00
Construction	100.00
Demolition	
Concrete/masonry/fireproofing	
Structural steel	
Architectural woodwork	
Hollow metal hardware	
Architectural metal and glass	
Drywall and carpentry	
Lath and acoustics	
Ceramic tile and stone	
Carpet/vinyl composition tile/base trim	
Paint/wallcovering	
Fabric panels	
Appliances	
Window treatments	

Activity	*Cost per square foot*
HVAC	
Plumbing	
Sprinklers	
Light fixtures	
Electric	
Communications cabling	
Graphics/signage	2.00
Audiovisual equipment	9.00
Security	2.00
Planning consultants	5.00
Permits	1.00
Building charges	1.00
Soft costs: design, construction consultants fees	18.47
Total, FF Building fit-out cost	**168.47**